

NEW INDIAN TEXTS FROM CENTRAL ASIA

(a new fragment of the « *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* »)

The discovery of ancient Indian texts in Central Asia at the end of 19th century opened a new stage in the study of Indian culture. There was found a large number of original Sanskrit literary and religious documents destroyed in India due to the climatic conditions but preserved in sand-covered ancient towns of Central Asia. The scholars have acquired many unique manuscripts, dating back to 6-8th centuries A.D. The publications of these texts by P. Pellio, A. Grünwedel, K. Otani, L. Finot, S. Lévi and others gave a possibility to reconsider a lot of traditional views concerning the domain of Indian cultural and historical influence, as well as the history and development of Buddhism, its schools and main trends.

New problems were put before buddhology: the problem of co-relation of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, that of the reconstruction of the Buddha's original teaching etc. Owing to the discovery of the languages not known before — Saka and Tocharian, as well as of the Central Asian variants of ancient Indian scripts, there appeared a new branch of oriental studies — the Central Asian philology and palaeography.

Owing to the expeditions of Russian scholars to Central Asia, the Russian Academy of Sciences has acquired a remarkable collection of Sanskrit and Saka-Khotanese manuscripts, in many aspects surpassing by its fullness and scientific value the Central Asian funds of France, Germany, Japan and other countries<sup>1</sup>.

Prof. S. Oldenburg was among the first researchers to investigate the Central Asian texts; in fact, he was a founder of the Soviet school

---

1. See M. I. VOROBYEVA-DESYATOVSKAYA, E. N. TYOMKIN, *The manuscripts of the Central Asian fund*, in « The Oriental Funds of the largest Libraries of the Soviet Union », Moscow, 1963, pp. 50-1 (in Russian); G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, E. N. TYOMKIN, *New Buddhist texts from Central Asia*, Moscow, 1967.

of Central Asian studies<sup>2</sup>. From the beginning of the 50-s a gifted Leningrad orientalist V. S. Vorobyev-Desyatovsky devoted himself to studies of the Central Asian fund; in spite of his short life he has succeeded in publishing a number of unique documents in Sanskrit and Saka languages<sup>3</sup>.

V. S. Vorobyev-Desyatovsky has accomplished a full catalogue of all manuscripts and fragments of the Central Asian fund which forms a solid base for further investigations of this valuable collection<sup>4</sup>. The publishing of Central Asian documents is an urgent task of Soviet scholars. Its realisation will give an opportunity to make use of dozens of new documents on Indian culture and will help to solve important

---

2. See T. I. STCHERBATSKY, S. F. OLDENBURG as an indologist, *To 50th anniversary of scientific and public activity of S. F. Oldenburg (1882-1932)*, Leningrad, 1934, pp. 15-23 (in Russian); S. OLDENBURG, *A preliminary note to the Buddhist manuscript, written in kharoṣṭhī*, S. Petersburg, 1897 (in Russian); S. OLDENBURG, *A Kashgar manuscript of N. Petrovsky*, ZVOIRAO, vol. 7, 1892, pp. 81-2 (in Russian); S. OLDENBURG, *To Kashgar Buddhist texts*, ZVOIRAO, vol. 8, 1893-94, pp. 152-53 (in Russian); S. OLDENBURG, *Notes on the Kashgar Buddhist texts*, ZVOIRAO, vol. 8, pp. 349-51 (in Russian); S. OLDENBURG, *Fragment of Kashgar and Sanskrit manuscripts from the collection of N. Petrovsky*, ZVOIRAO, vol. 1897-98, pp. 207-64 (in Russian); *ibid.*, vol. 15, 1902-3, pp. 0113-0112 (in Russian).

3. Details in G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, E. N. TYOMKIN, *Works by V. S. Vorobyev-Desyatovsky and investigation of the Buddhist texts from N. Petrovsky collection*, in «Problems of the history of languages and culture of the peoples of India (A collection of articles in memoriam of V. S. Vorobyev-Desyatovsky)», M., 1974, pp. 12-9 (in Russian). See also the bibliography of works by V. S. Vorobyev-Desyatovsky printed there.

4. Recently some of the texts were investigated and published: see G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, E. N. TYOMKIN, *New Buddhist texts from Central Asia*; G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, *Buddhist Studies in the USSR and New Archaeological excavations in Soviet Central Asia*, in «East Asian Cultural Studies», vol. XII, 1973, nn. 14, pp. 11-28; G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, E. N. TYOMKIN, *Fragment of an unknown manuscript of the Saddharmapundarika from N. F. Petrovsky collection*, in «Indo-Iranian Journal», vol. VIII, 1965, n. 4, pp. 268-74; G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, *Two new fragments of the Saddharmapundarika (a preliminary note)*, in «Indian Culture and Buddhism», M., 1972, pp. 187-91 (in Russian); G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, M. I. VOROBYEVA-DESYATOVSKAYA, E. N. TYOMKIN, *New Sanskrit texts from Central Asia*, in «A programme of the conference on the languages of India, Pakistan, Nepal and Ceylon», M., 1965 (in Russian); G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, M. I. VOROBYEVA-DESYATOVSKAYA, E. N. TYOMKIN, *On investigation of Indian texts from Central Asia*, in «Materials on history and philology of Central Asia», Ulan-Ude, 1968, n. 3, pp. 105-17 (in Russian); G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, M. I. VOROBYEVA-DESYATOVSKAYA, E. N. TYOMKIN, *A fragment of the Sanskrit Sumukhādhārāṇi*, in «Indo-Iranian Journal», vol. X, 1967, nn. 2-3, pp. 150-59; G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, E. N. TYOMKIN, *Fragment of the Saka version of the Dharmasārira-sūtra from the N. F. Petrovsky collection*, in «Indo-Iranian Journal», vol. XI, 1969, n. 4, pp. 269-80; see also AKIRA YUYAMA, *Supplementary remarks on «Fragment of an unknown manuscript of the Saddharmapundarika from N. F. Petrovsky collection by G. M. Bongard-Levin and E. N. Tyomkin»*, in «Indo-Iranian Journal», vol. IX, n. 2, 1966, pp. 85-112; *A Bibliography of the Sanskrit texts of the Saddharmapundarika*, Canberra, 1970, pp. 21, 22, 102; H. BECHERT, *Über die «Marburger Fragmente des Saddharmapundarika»*, in «Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Philologisch-Historische Klasse», 1972, n. 1, s. 3-81.

problems related to the history of spiritual culture of India and neighbouring countries in ancient and early medieval periods.

The fragments of the « Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra » — an important religious text of « Northern Buddhism » — are of the utmost interest among the Buddhist Sanskrit texts of the Central Asian fund. Only two fragments of this text were at the disposal of the scholars until quite recently<sup>5</sup>; that is why the study of the « Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra » as well as all connected problems of Mahāyāna religion and history of early Mahāyāna sūtras was carried out with the help of Tibetan and Chinese translations. The Sanskrit texts of the « Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra », which were discovered in Turfan by a German expedition and later published by E. Waldschmidt, form a part of Mūlasarvāstivāda canon and are not directly connected with Mahāyāna<sup>6</sup>. Southern (or Thera-vāda) tradition is represented by the « Mahāparinibbāna-sutta » — the sixteenth sūtra of the Dīgha-Nikāya<sup>7</sup>.

It was V. Vorobyev-Desyatovsky, who, while studying the Central Asian fund, brought attention to the existence of five fragments of the « Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra » in his catalogue; later we discovered one more fragment<sup>8</sup>. Now the investigation of these fragments is completed: their transliteration and translation are accomplished, they are annotated and a lot of lacunas are reconstructed. Judging by the fragments, the Mahāyāna version of the « Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra » differs textologically and conceptually from the Pāli and the Sanskrit (Mūlasarvāstivāda) ones<sup>9</sup>. A completely new interpretation was given to basic ideas of the early Buddhist religion in Mahāyāna. It deals with the interpretation of nirvāṇa, salvation, the Buddhahood etc.

5. See R. HÖERNLE, *Manuscript remains of Buddhist literature*, vol. I, Oxford, 1916, pp. 93-7, pl. XXI; TAISHŌ, *Taishō, Shinshū Daizōkyō*, t. XII, p. 604. According to D. S. RUEGG, *one of the passages of this Mahāyāna sūtra is given in Ratnagotravibhāga-Vyākhyā (I, 153) - A commentary on the famous Mahāyāna treatise Ratnagotravibhāga-Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra*. See D. S. RUEGG, *Le traité du Tathāgatagarbha du Bon Ston Rin Chen Grub*, Paris, 1973, p. 24; NAKAMURA HAJIME, *A critical survey of Mahāyāna and esoteric Buddhism chiefly based upon Japanese studies*, in « *Asiatica* », vol. VII, Tokyo, 1964, pp. 49-53.

6. See E. W. WALDSCHMIDT, *Das Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, in « *Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* », Bd. I-III, 1950-51.

7. « *Dīgha-Nikāya* », vol. II (Pāli Text Society). Ed. T. W. Rhys Davids, J. E. Carpenter, London, 1947.

8. A short characterization of these fragments has been given. See G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, E. N. TYOMKIN, *New Buddhist texts from Central Asia*, in « *Journal of the Asiatic Society* », vol. XI, 1969, nn. 1-4; G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, *Buddhist studies...*; G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, E. N. TYOMKIN, *Works by Vorobyev-Desyatovsky...* (in Russian).

9. The difference between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna versions was pointed out by many scholars on the basis of the Chinese translations (see, for instance, L. RENOU, J. FILLIOZAT, *L'inde classique*, Paris, 1953, t. II, p. 435).

The «Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra» was very popular in Central Asia and China. Chinese sources preserve a story about the journey of Dharmakṣema, a native of Magadha, in India, to Khotan in search of the Mahāyāna manuscripts of the «Nirvāṇasūtra»<sup>10</sup>. Dharmakṣema has discovered in Khotan the copies of the Sūtra and on his return to China, accomplished a translation of the Sanskrit text into Chinese. This tradition is in accordance with the find of the six fragments of the Sūtra in Central Asia. Moreover, the acquaintance with these texts shows them to be of the different handwritten copies.

The opinions of the scholars concerning the date of the «Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra» differ a great deal: some consider it to be accomplished by 200-300 A.D., other suggest later dates — the beginning of the Gupta Dynasty in India<sup>11</sup>. Our fragments are written in upright Central Asian brāhmī<sup>12</sup>. It is fairly possible to assume them to be a part of a manuscript, copied in Central Asia from some Indian version of the Sūtra. Judging by the data of the Chinese texts, the manuscripts of the «Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra» were widespread in Kashmir in the 5th century A.D. The existence of the Indian versions (Indian original texts) is mentioned in the Chinese works dealing with the activity of Dharmakṣema. For example, it is mentioned that Dharmakṣema originally brought an incomplete manuscript of «Mahāyāna Nirvāṇasūtra» from India to China. The Chinese sources also inform us that the beginning of the Sūtra was written upon birch-bark. In scholars' opinion it may be an indication of the Kashmirian origin of the Sūtra's basic version.

The text under publication concerns one of the main episodes in the traditional biography of the Buddha — his meeting with Cunda and his following nirvāṇa<sup>13</sup>.

10. P. CH. BAGCHI, *India and Central Asia*, Calcutta, 1955; E. ZÜRCHER, *The Buddhist conquest of China. The spread and adaptation of Buddhism in early medieval China*, vol. I, Leiden, 1959; A. GABAIN, *Der Buddhismus in Zentralasien*, in «Handbuch der Orientalistik», Bd. 8 (Religionsgeschichte in der Zeit der Weltreligionen), 1961, Leiden-Köln; «Ch'an and Zen teaching», Ed., transl. and expl. by Lu K'uan Yü, London, 1962.

11. See L. RENOU, J. FILLIOZAT, *L'inde classique*, t. II, p. 435; H. NAKAMURA, *A critical survey...*, pp. 45-50.

12. Cf. F. W. THOMAS, *Brāhmī script in Central-Asian Sanskrit manuscripts*, in «Asiatica», Leipzig, 1954; L. SANDER, *Paläographisches zu den Sanskrithandschriften der Berliner Turfansammlung*, Wiesbaden, 1968.

13. Details in A. BAREAU, *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans le Sūtra-piṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens. II. Les derniers mois, le parinirvāṇa et les funérailles*, t. I, Paris, 1970,

According to the tradition, having visited Vaiśālī, the Buddha left for Kuśīnagara (Pāli Kusinārā). On his way there he stayed in Jalūkā Mahāvana in the Malla region. Cunda, who was a son of a Kuśīnagara blacksmith invited the Buddha together with his disciples to his own meal. The Buddha accepted the invitation and ate the food offered by Cunda. Then together with his disciples the Buddha started for Kuśīnagara, but somewhere between the town of Pāpā and the river Hiraṇyavati he felt a sharp pain in his back. The legend says that he announced to Ānanda his impending going into parinirvāṇa.

Our fragment also informs about the meeting of the Buddha with Cunda, about the latter's last offering of food to the Buddha and the impending nirvāṇa of the Buddha; but its comparison with the Pāli and the Sanskrit (Mūlasarvāstivāda) versions shows evident differences of interpretation of the events, and, what is of utmost importance — manifests a totally different (really Mahāyānist) doctrinal interpretation of the main conceptions.

Judging by the palaeographic data, this fragment dates back to the 6-7th century A.D. Its content is extremely close to the Tibetan translation of the 9th century, accomplished by Jinamitra, Jñānagarbha and Devacandra, as well as to the Chinese translation of the 5th century by Dharmakṣema — the so-called translation of 40 ts'iuans (chapters)<sup>14</sup>. Closeness of the Tibetan translation to the Sanskrit original text is so evident, that the Tibetan version may be regarded as the translation of the manuscript identical with the one, from which these fragments are derived.

The fragment being published here<sup>15</sup> consists of one sheet (recto and verso), the text is put down in black ink upon the light-brown paper, there are 7 lines, dimensions 15/17 cm<sup>2</sup>, medium state of preservation,

P

23-26 akṣaras in each line. It is registered as SI— in the collection  
88b

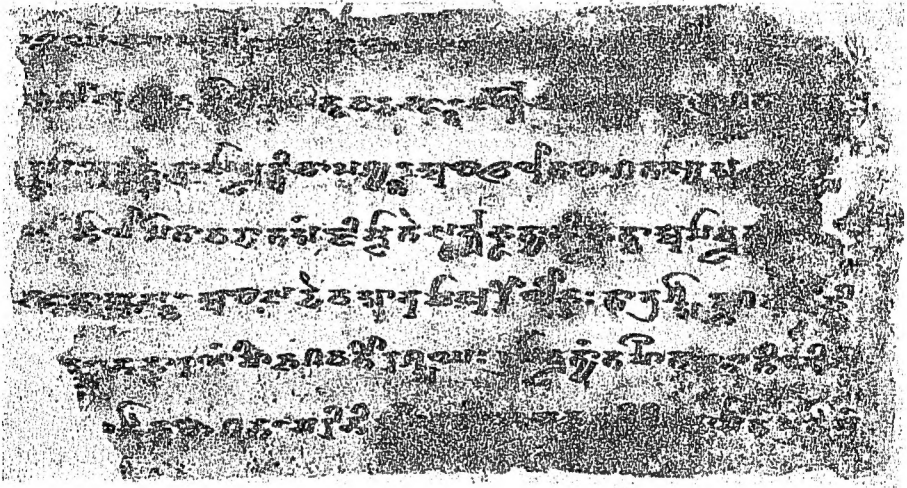
of N. Petrovsky. It is in accordance with the 20 a(4) - 20 b(27) sheet of the Tibetan xylograph (Hphags-pa yoṅs-su-mya-nan-las-ḥdas-pa čhen-po theg-pa čhen-poḥi mdo, Bkaḥ-ḥgyur, vol. tha) and 371 b(12) - 371 c(7) of the Chinese translation of Dharmakṣema (12th volume of the Chinese Tripiṭaka).

14. Given the opportunity, I express my deepest gratitude to M. I. Vorobyeva-Desyatovskaya and L. N. Menshikov for their help with Chinese and Tibetan translations.

15. See G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, *New Indian texts from Central Asia (An unknown fragment of «Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra»)*, in «Peoples of Asia and Africa», n. 6, 1975, pp. 145-51 (in Russian).

## A

1. ...iyam ca sahalokadhātuḥ tathāgatānubhāvena vyapagataloṣṭapā-  
śaṇ[ā]...
2. ...sparsā sukhāvātīlokadhātuvad abhūt.sarvve ca te satvās tatrāgatā.  
tatrasthā
3. ...rūpā buddhakṣetrā<sup>1</sup> sāmrddhi<sup>2</sup> cāpaśyan.atha khalu tathāgatasya  
mukha[to]...
4. ...ṇ[i] nīlapītavadātamaṃjīṣṭhā<sup>3</sup> te sarvvakṛtyāni kṛtvā apāvṛttā...
5. ...bhūtā āsan.atha sadevamānuṣāsuro lokāḥ tān raśmīd<sup>4</sup> bhagavato  
bhi
6. ...[van?].nakāraṇaṃ<sup>5</sup> hi bhagavato raśmayāḥ upāvṛtyāmtarhitā iti.  
nisam<sup>6</sup>
7. ...[id]ānīn tathāgataparinirvāsyati.na ca kutaści piṇḍapātāṃ prati-  
ṣṭhaṃ<sup>7</sup>



1. Usually with a short a, \*kṣetra.

2. Evidently, samrddhi. The copyist made a mistake writing long a[ā]; i is possible in Acc. Sing. Fem. in Buddhist Sanskrit, cf. F. EDGERTON, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary* (later Edg.), vol. I (Grammar), New Haven, 1953, 10.50.

3. Ought to be mañjīṣṭha.

4. Evidently, a mistake of the copyist. Ought to be raśmīn; Nom-Acc. Pl.-in. See Edg. I.10.165.

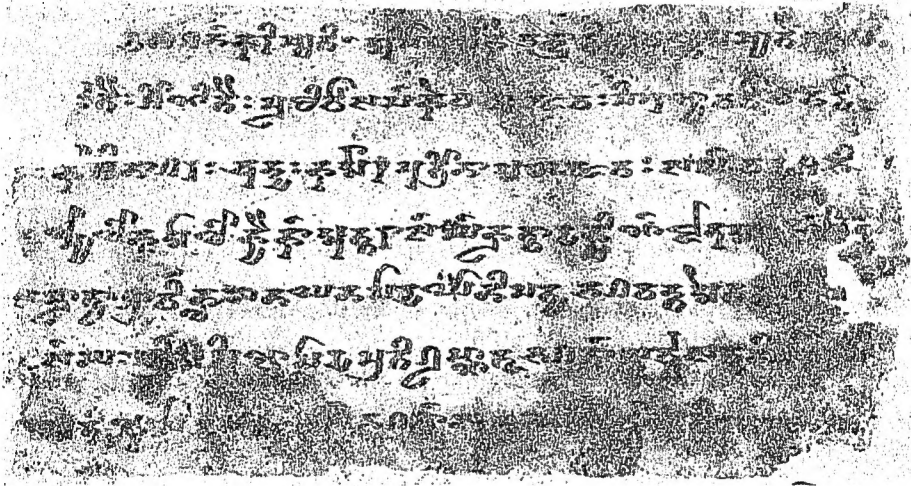
5. Ought to be nākāraṇaṃ.

6. In Tibetan translation, «without doubt», that is why in the text, evidently, nisamśayaṃ. About the use of nisamśayaṃ in Buddhist Sanskrit instead of the regular niḥsaṃśayaṃ. See Edg. II, p. 309.

7. Possibly instead of praticchati (compare the Tibetan translation).

## B

1. ...ca nāśanam kariṣyati.aho nu loke candrādityāv astam eṣyate.sa
2. ...itaiḥ śoṇitaiḥ pṛthivī sapamkeva babhūva: hiraṇyavatī ca nadī
3. ...k[au]śināgarah cundaḥ karmāraputro nāma babhūva: sa paṃca-  
daśabhi
4. ...[ka?]lpya lokam ālokyaikāmm uttarāsaṃgham<sup>1</sup> kṛtvā dakṣiṇam  
jānumaṇḍalam pṛ
5. ...sa[m?]hṛtyāśruviklabanayana pādayo<sup>2</sup> nipatya bhagavantam etad  
avoc[at]
6. ...saṃgha [pa]ścima[m] piṇḍapāda<sup>3</sup> pratigrhṇatu<sup>4</sup> bhagavām sarv-  
vasatvanistāraṇā
7. ...matpiṇḍapāda[m]<sup>5</sup> [pratigrhi]ttvām<sup>6</sup> bhagavāms tataḥ parinirv-  
vāsyati.tadyathā hi



- 
1. uttarāsaṃgham.
  2. Ought to be pādayor.
  3. Ought to be piṇḍapātām.
  4. Usually pratigrhṇātu.
  5. piṇḍapātām.
  6. extra m.



Mahāyāna  
« Nīrvāṇasūtra »

Mūlasarvāstivāda  
« Nīrvāṇasūtra »

« Mahāparinibbāna »  
(« Dīgha-Nikāya », XVI)

Verso

3. kauśināgarah cundaḥ  
karmāraputro nāma  
babhūva

26.7. ... cundaḥ  
karmāraputras  
tasmin samāye  
saṃṣaṇṇo 'bhut  
sannipatitaḥ

4.14. ekamantaṃ  
nisinnaṃ kho  
cundaṃ  
kammāraputtaṃ...

4-5. uttarāsaṃghaṃ kṛtvā  
dakṣiṇaṃ  
jānumaṇḍalaṃ pr...  
sa[m?]hṛtyāśruvikla-  
banayana pādayo  
nipatya bhagavantam  
etad avoc[at]

26.8. ... ekāṃsam  
uttarāsaṃghaṃ kṛtvā  
yena bhagavāṃs  
tenāñjaliṃ  
praṇamya  
bhagavantam idam  
avocat

4.15. bhagavantam etad  
avoca

7. matpiṇḍapāda[m]  
[pratigṛhi]ttvāṃ  
bhagavāṃs tataḥ  
parinirvāsyati

29.10. yaṃ ca piṇḍa-  
(pātaṃ bhuktvā  
tathāgato)  
'nupadiśeṣe  
nirvāṇadhātau  
parinirvāsyate

4.42. yañ ca piṇḍapātaṃ  
bhuñjitvā tathāgato  
anupādisesāya  
nibbānadhātuyā  
parinibbāyati

## TRANSLATION

### A

1. ... This world, inhabited by people, owing to the Tathāgata's dignity became devoid of pebbles stones...
- 2.. ... (pleasant) to the touch became like the world Sukhāvātī<sup>16</sup>. And all the living beings who came there and stood there
3. ... [having seen] bodily forms, they saw the prosperity (accomplishment) of the buddhas' field<sup>17</sup>. Then out of the Tathāgata's mouth...

16. According to the *Notes to translation* Mahāyāna adepts, Sukhāvātī is a world of the Buddha Amitābha. There is a special text in Sanskrit given to the description of Sukhāvātī and Amitābha and entitled Amitābhavyūha (or Sukhāvātivyūha). This text was published for the first time by F. Max Müller (*Sukhāvātivyūha. Description of Sukhāvātī the land of bliss*. Ed. by F. Max Müller and Bunyiu Nanjio. With two app. 1. *Text and translation of Saṅgharvarman's Chinese version of the poetical portions of the Sukhāvātivyūha*; 2. *Sanskrit text of the smaller Sukhāvātivyūha*, Oxford, 1883), in *Anecdota Ononiensia, Aryan ser.*, vol. I, pt. II.

17. According to the Mahāyāna doctrine, « the buddha's field » (buddhakṣetra) is a sort of « dwelling-region » among the vast number of the worlds of the universe where a bodhisattva is preparing to become the Buddha, and where one of the buddhas actually dwells. See A. K. WARDER, *Indian Buddhism*, Delhi, 1970; E. CONZE, *Buddhist thought in India. Three phases of Buddhist philosophy*, Ann Arbor, 1970.



4. ... these (rays) of blue, yellow, white and bright-red (colours) returned again, having accomplished all actions <sup>18</sup>...
5. ... escaped. Then gods, demons, asuras who compose the world (loka) (saw that) these rays (in) the Buddha's (mouth).
6. ... (they said): « And it is not without the cause that these rays, having returned to the Tathāgata's mouth, vanished ». « Undoubtedly
7. ... now the Tathāgata will enter into parinirvāṇa, and he accepts no offering of food from anybody » <sup>19</sup>...

## B

1. ... « and (he) will not taste food. Oh, the Sun and the Moon will vanish in this world. He »
2. ... The earth became like dirt because of blood, and the river Hiraṇyavatī <sup>20</sup>
3. ... /there/ was Cunda from Kuśīnagara, a son of a blacksmith. He, together with fifteen
4. ... /having become filled with faith?/, having looked at the world, set right his upper clothes <sup>21</sup> and /touching the/ ground with his right knee
5. ... with tear-impaired eyes, clinging close to /the Buddha's/ feet, he said to the Bhagavat so:
6. ... « May the Bhagavat /together/ with his community accept the last offering of food /for/ the full salvation of the living beings
7. ... Having accepted the last offering of food, may the Bhagavat enter into parinirvāṇa. Even just like the »...

Compare the Chinese translation / The Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra, A Complete Translation from the Classical Chinese Language in 3 volumes, Annotated and with Full Glossary, Index, and Concordance

---

18. A similar notion concerning the « magic power of the Buddha » is preserved in the « Saddharmapuṇḍarīka »; one of the most important Mahāyāna texts.

19. Piṇḍapāta (Pāli Piṇḍapāta), alms-food, usually received by the monks into their alms-bowls (piṇḍa).

20. Hiraṇyavatī (Pāli: Hiraṇṇavatī), a name of the river, on the banks of which, according to the Buddhist tradition, the Buddha entered into nirvāṇa.

21. Apparently, having exposed his right shoulder, just as it is done by the monks. Cf. Tibetan and Chinese translations.

by Kosho Yamamoto, Tokyo, 1973; Introduction, pp. 26-27; Book II, 2 - Chapter on Cunda, p. 29:

Then, the three thousand worlds, by the Buddha's power, became soft to touch. There were there no hills, sands, gravels, thistles, and poisonous plants; but all were adorned with various treasures as in the case of the Western land of peace and happiness of Buddha Amitāyus. At the time, all those congregated there saw the innumerable number of Buddha lands, as though they saw their forms reflected in a mirror. The same was the case when they saw the lands of all Buddhas.

The light that issued from the Tathāgata's face was fine in colour, and it shone and covered all the great congregation, so that it blotted out the light that came out of the body. Having done this, it again turned back to the Buddha, back to him through his mouth. Then, the heavenly beings and all those congregated there, asuras and others, became greatly afraid, as they saw the Buddha's light entering him through his mouth. Their hair stood on the end. And they said: « The light of the Tathāgata, having come out, goes back and enters. It is not without reason. This tells that the Buddha did what he ought to have done in the ten quarters and now enters nirvāṇa as the last act. This must be what it means to tell us. Woe is the world, woe the world. Why is it that the world is honoured? One so abandons the four limitless minds and does not accept the offerings of man and heaven. The light of wisdom eternally goes out now. The unsurpassed boat of the Law now sinks. Ah, this pain! Woe is the world ». They held up their hands, bent their breasts, and sorrowfully cried out and wept. The limbs shook, and they did not know how to support themselves. Blood came out of the body and ran over the ground.

At the time, there was present an upāsaka among the congregated. He was the son of an artisan of this castle town of Kuśīnagara. Cunda was the name. He was there with his comrades, who were fifteen in number. In order that the world should promote good fruit, he abandoned all bodily adornments, stood up, bared his right shoulder, put his right knee on the ground, and, folding his hands, looked up at the Buddha. Sorrowfully and with tears, he touched...

Moscow.

#### ADDENDA

See also: G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN, *New Buddhist Sanskrit Texts from Central Asia: An unknown fragment of the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, in « The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies », vol. 4, n. 2, 1981, pp. 7-16 (unfortunately with many misprints); AKIRA YUYAMA, *Sanskrit Fragments of the Mahāyāna* (unfortunately with many misprints); AKIRA YUYAMA, *Sanskrit Fragments of the Mahāyāna* vol. IV, Tokyo, 1981.